REPORT
PREPARED BY:

Bloomberg Philanthropies | Initiative for Global Road Safety

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
International Injury Research Unit

Vital Strategies

CIPRB

Status Summary 2024:

Road Safety Risk Factors

Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety

DHAKA NORTH, BANGLADESH

JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
of PUBLIC HEALTH

International
Injury Research Unit

Beginning in May 2021, the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit, through the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety, has been conducting observations in Dhaka North to reduce road injuries and fatalities.

The following report highlights results from an ongoing study that captured observations of speed as a risk factor.* The results are based on data collected between October 2021 and November 2024.

*The study observed helmet use and seat-belt and child restraint use and shared the findings in the 2022 Status Summary Report.

Speeding among all observed vehicles was**

1%

Driving above the speed limit of 30 km/h was common among vehicles on local and collector roads

24%

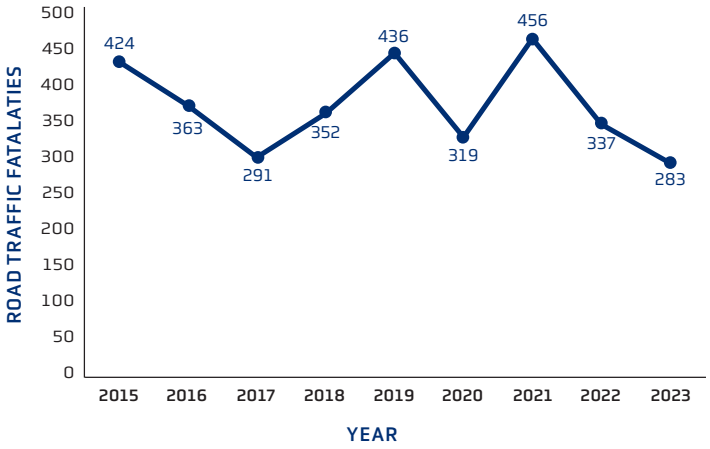
The mean speed among all observed vehicles was

28 km/h

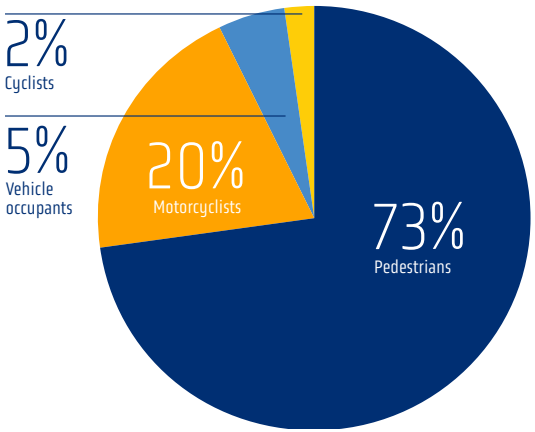
**In the absence of speed limit signage, speed limits provided by the local traffic police were used to determine speeding.

Road Traffic Fatalities in Dhaka North

Road traffic fatalities have decreased since 2021



Deaths by road user, 2023



Vulnerable road users (pedestrians, motorcyclists, and cyclists) **accounted for 95% of reported road traffic fatalities**.

[#] Note: Data from existing sources was used for the outcome data indicators. Police and crash data systems are prone to underreporting.

Recommendations

Bangladesh Road Safety Coalition

- Advocate with the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority to develop and issue directives for implementing the Speed Limit Guideline 2024.
- Advocate for design changes to national design guidelines so that road designs self-enforce new speed limits.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority

- Provide guidance to cities and local authorities to implement the Speed Limit Guideline 2024.
- Coordinate with relevant authorities to update road design guidelines, ensuring roads are designed for correct speeds.

Dhaka North City Corporation

- Designate speed limits according to the Speed Limit Guideline 2024.
- Ensure roads are built and repaired to encourage slower driving by design.
- Inform the public of the new law and how its enforcement will save lives.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police

- Enhance speed enforcement in coordination with mass-media campaigns.

Speed in Dhaka North

Higher speeds lead to a greater risk of a crash and a higher probability of serious injury. An increase of 1 km/h in average vehicle speed results in an increase of 3% in the incidence of crashes resulting in injury and an increase of 4%–5% in the incidence of fatal crashes.*

*Save LIVES: A road safety technical package. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017.

Speeding among all observed vehicles was low (1%).

Applying the global recommendation of 30 km/h for local and collector roads, **24% of the vehicles were observed to be traveling at unsafe speed.**

Functional classification of roads

Expressways: These are six- to eight-lane controlled-access highways with modern features, such as access ramps, grade separation, lane dividers, and elevated sections.

National Highways: These are multi-lane roads connecting major cities, state capitals, and sometimes neighboring countries.

Arterial roads: These are roadways with high traffic volume; they provide a high degree of mobility and carry a high proportion of travel for long distance trips. These roadways carry the major portion of trips entering and leaving an activity center, as well as the majority of movements that either go directly or bypass the area.

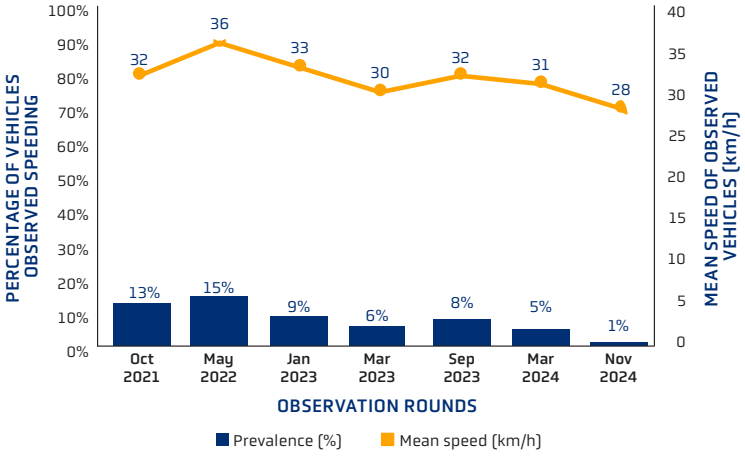
Local roads: These roads provide limited mobility and are the primary access to residential areas, businesses, farms, and other local areas.

Collector roads: These roads collect traffic from local roads and connect to arterial roads. They penetrate neighborhoods and communities, collecting and distributing traffic between neighborhoods and arterial roads. Collector roads are shorter than arterial roads but longer than local roads.

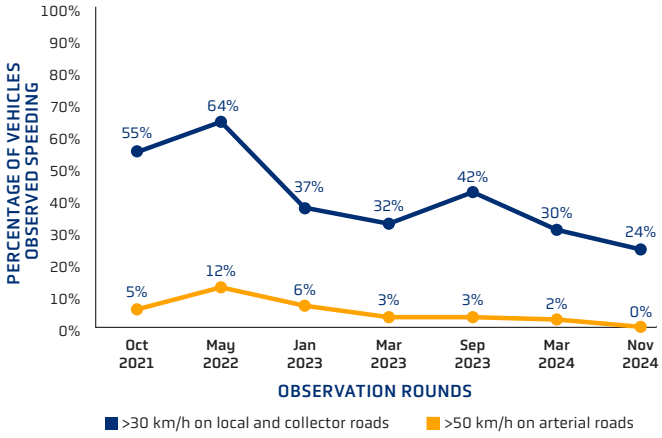
These roads provide less mobility than arterial roads at lower speeds and for shorter distances.

Key Findings on Speed in Dhaka North

Speeding and mean speeds have decreased in Dhaka North



Vehicles on local and collector roads consistently exceeded the recommended speed of 30 km/h



Recommendations

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority

- Develop and issue instructions for implementing the Speed Limit Guideline 2024 and ensure its effective implementation.
- Build technical capacities of cities in classifying roads and assigning appropriate speed limits according to the Speed Limit Guideline 2024.
- Coordinate efforts to update road design codes to ensure roads are built according to the new speed limits.

Dhaka North City Corporation

- Designate speed limits according to the functional classification of roads and the Speed Limit Guideline 2024.
- Inform the public of the new speed limit law and how it will save lives.
- Implement speed-calming measures, particularly where pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcycles interact with four-wheelers.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police

- Implement targeted speed enforcement after speed limits are designated by the local authority and the community is informed.

Speed Limit Guideline 2024

In May 2024, the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) issued the Speed Limit Guideline 2024 to reduce road fatalities and injuries. This guideline set a maximum speed limit of 80 km/h on expressways and highways and a maximum speed limit of 40 km/h on city roads.*

*Speed Limit Guideline 2024. Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. May 2024. https://brta.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/brta.portal.gov.bd/notification_circular/cfe30939_eb5d_4f0a_89e7_3faf3e916ff6/2024-05-09-13-54-f22d36125a03ec00dd9ec48ca983a1e7.jpg

Key Features:

Aligned with World Health Organization (WHO) standards

Authorizes local authorities to set lower speed limits

Sets a national maximum speed limit of 80 km/h

Requires speed limit signs be displayed on roads, highways, and expressways by vehicle type

Sets speed limits according to the road type and vehicle type

Speed Limit Guideline 2024

Maximum speed limit related to cities/urban areas:

ROADS	SPEED LIMIT	RESTRICTIONS
National and regional highways passing through city corporation areas	30 – 40 km/h	
Internal city corporation roads	30 – 40 km/h	Goods carrier with trailer
Primary urban roads, undivided with two lanes, excluding national and regional highways	30 – 40 km/h	Buses, minibuses, trucks, vans, and goods carriers with trailer
Narrow/shared roads (undivided with two lanes)	20 – 30 km/h	Buses and minibuses

City staff conducting speed observations as part of a capacity building workshop.
Photo: Md. Zabir Hasan, Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit

Speed Limit Guideline 2024

In May 2024, the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) issued the Speed Limit Guideline 2024 to reduce road fatalities and injuries. Although the implementation of this guideline has not yet been initiated, we applied the maximum speed limits proposed for different road types and vehicle types to the speed observational data collected in November 2024. The overall goal of this analysis was to assess the expected prevalence of speeding if the Speed Limit Guideline 2024 was implemented.

Speeding among all observed vehicles was high (23%).

By vehicle category, speeding was highest among motorcycles (51%).

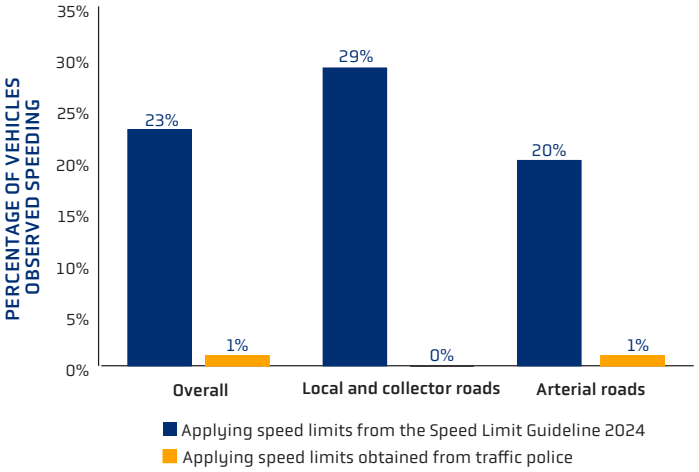
Speeding was more frequently observed on local and collector roads (29%).

Speeding was high among commercial vehicles (32%).

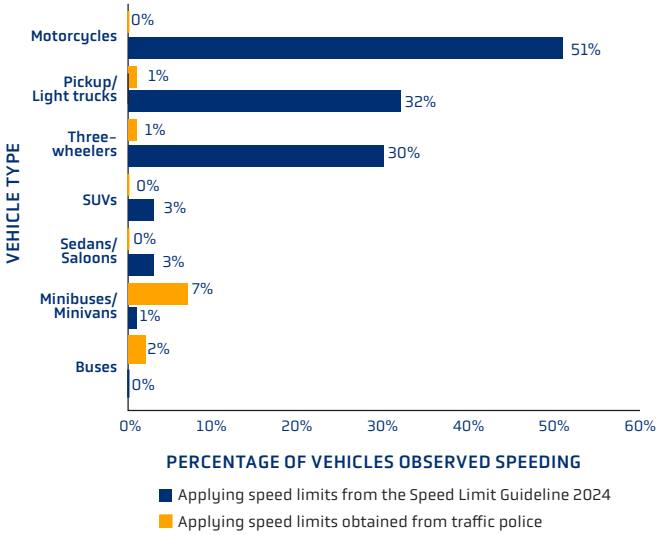
Speeding was more frequently observed on weekends (26%) compared with weekdays (22%).

Key Findings on Speed in Dhaka North applying the Speed Limit Guideline 2024

Speeding was high and frequent on local and collector roads



Speeding was highest among motorcycles



Recommendations

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority

- Provide guidance to cities and local authorities to implement the Speed Limit Guideline 2024, including how to classify roads and assign appropriate speed limits.

Dhaka North City Corporation

- Designate speed limits according to the new Speed Limit Guideline 2024.
- Increase public awareness of speed as a risk factor for road crashes and the Speed Limit Guideline 2024 and how its enforcement will save lives.
- Generate awareness of speed limits through appropriate signage.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police

- Initiate speed enforcement of new speed limits instituted per the Speed Limit Guideline 2024.
- Implement targeted speed enforcement with a focus on:
  - Motorcycles.
  - Pickup and light trucks.
  - Commercial vehicles.

Before and after photos of the intervention at Mohammadpur intersection in Dhaka North, Bangladesh.
Photo: World Resources Institute

METHODS

Since 2021, the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit (JH-IIRU) has partnered with the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh (CIPRB) to conduct roadside observations. The methods for these findings were developed by the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit and implemented in collaboration with the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh. This report provides results from twice-a-year cross-sectional observational surveys that represent population-level (citywide) prevalence of speed as an important road safety risk factor, to show changes over time. Across the seven rounds of observations made in the current phase, over 520,000 observations have been made for speed.

Fifteen observation sites were randomly selected, conditional on the safety of observers. A standardized protocol was used with vehicles selected for observation in a systematic quasi-random fixed sequence. It is known that speeding is likely to be higher during the late night/early morning hours, but observations were preformed between 7:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on both weekdays and weekend days. For the November 2022 round, five additional sites and two additional timeslots (early morning from 4:30 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. and late night from 9:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.) were included as requested by the local authorities. Findings from these additional sites and timeslots were shared in the 2022 Status Summary Report. The methods were designed to estimate citywide prevalence and cannot provide insights into interventions conducted in specific locations in the city. The data management team at Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit reviewed and cleaned the data to produce the analyses available in this report.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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